



Health Expectancy among Older People in Thailand

Sirinya Kaikew, Jongjit Rittirong and Sureeporn Punpuing

Institute for Population and Social Research (IPSR), Mahidol University, Thailand

Objective: Thailand is experiencing rapid population ageing due to declining fertility and increasing life expectancy (LE) ⁽¹⁾. The increase in LE has raised the question: “Are Thai older people living longer with a healthy life?”. This study aims to investigate changes in health expectancy among older people (aged 60+) through LE and disability-free life expectancy (DFLE) between 2007 and 2014.

Datasets: Mortality data is age-sex specific death rates in 2007 and 2014, by the Strategy and Planning Division of the Ministry of Public Health (MOPH). Disability data is the prevalence of disability in older people, by the 3rd and 5th National Elderly Surveys in Thailand in 2007 and 2014 from the National Statistical Office (NSO).

Findings:

Life Expectancy (LE), Disability-free LE (DFLE), the Expected Lifetime with Disability (LE-DFLE) and the Proportion of Expected Years Lived Free from Disability (%DFLE/LE) for Thais by Age and Sex

Age group	2007				2014			
	LE	DFLE	LE-DFLE	%DFLE/LE	LE	DFLE	LE-DFLE	%DFLE/LE
Male								
60-64	18.1	17.1	1.0	94.5	21.3	19.7	1.5	92.9
65-69	14.7	13.7	1.0	93.1	17.7	16.2	1.5	91.4
70-74	11.5	10.4	1.0	91.0	14.6	13.0	1.6	89.1
75-79	8.6	7.6	1.0	88.3	11.6	10.0	1.6	86.2
80-84	5.9	4.9	0.9	84.3	9.2	7.6	1.6	82.4
85+	3.0	2.4	0.6	78.8	7.3	5.7	1.5	78.8
Female								
60-64	20.5	18.6	1.9	90.6	24.2	21.3	2.9	87.9
65-69	16.6	14.7	1.9	88.4	20.2	17.2	2.9	85.4
70-74	12.9	11.0	1.9	85.3	16.4	13.5	2.9	82.0
75-79	9.5	7.7	1.8	81.5	13.0	10.1	2.9	78.0
80-84	6.4	4.8	1.6	75.4	10.1	7.3	2.8	72.4
85+	3.3	2.2	1.1	66.6	7.7	5.1	2.6	66.6

Conclusion and Recommendation

The gain of LE among Thai older people has been greater than the increase in health expectancy. This suggests - there has been an *absolute expansion of disability* ⁽³⁾.

Thai older people are living longer, but they spend more years with disabilities, particularly older women.

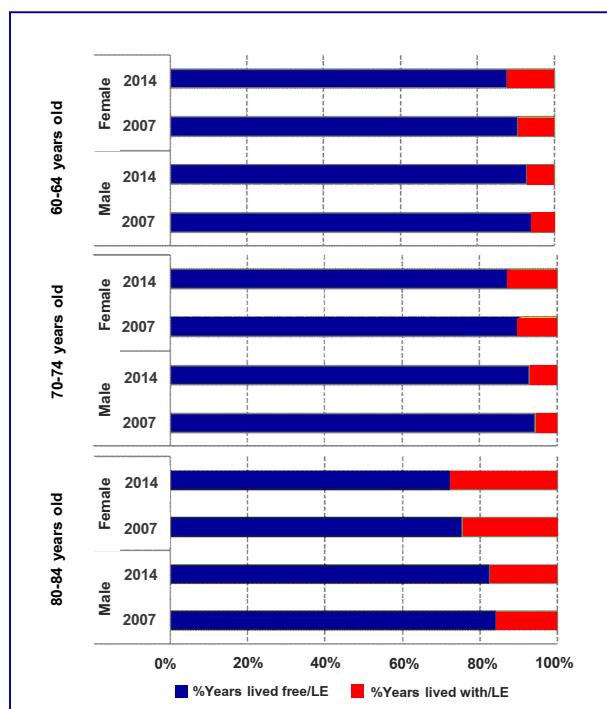
Government policy should provide health interventions to increase DFLE among Thais by encourage young people to reduce unhealthy behaviors to avoid chronic illness or disability later in life.

Health measure: Disability refers to the inability to perform at least one of 5 ADLs without assistance (feeding, dressing, bathing, toileting, and walking) which called *ADL disability*.

Method : Sullivan’s method was employed to compute the DFLE which is a proxy indicator of health expectancy⁽²⁾.



Proportion of Years Lived Free from Disability and With a Disability to Total Life Expectancy (LE) by Age and Sex



Reference

(1) Prasartkul, P., & Vapattanawong, P. (2011). Transitional point of the Thai population. In Sureeporn Punpuing & Malee Sunpuwan (Eds.), *Population and Social 2011: Thailand's population in transition: A Turning Point for Thai Society*. (pp. 13-22). Institute for Population and Social Research.

(2) Sullivan, D. F. (1971). A single index of mortality and morbidity. *HSMHA health reports*, 86(4), 347.

(3) Gruenberg, E. M. (1977). The failures of success. *The Milbank Memorial Fund Quarterly. Health and Society*, 3-24.



Contact information